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CITE

TO: PRIORITY DIRECTOR.

REF: DIRECTOR 675920

LAYTON FROM

1. FOLLOWING PERSONAL VIEWS ARE SUBMITTED IN EFFORT TO
BE HELPFUL ON COMMUNITY'S NEXT MILITARY ASSESSMENT DESCRIBED
REF. USE AS YOU SEE FIT,

2. KEY POINT TO BE MADE IN MY JUDGMENT IS THAT NORTH
VIETNAM NOW HAS CAPABILITY TO WIN TOTAL MILITARY VICTORY IN THE
SOUTH WITHIN THE NEXT THREE MONTHS. ONE CAN DEBATE NOW MUCH OF
THE REMAINING NVA STRATEGIC RESERVE OR HOW MANY NVA COMBAT UNITS
NOW IN MR-1 OR MR-2 WOULD BE NEEDED FURTHER SOUTH TO ACHIEVE
TOTAL VICTORY, BUT THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT SUCH A VICTORY BY
HANOI IS ACHIEVABLE. THE MAGNITUDE OF RVNAF'S DEFEAT IN MR-1
AND MR-2 HAS DECISIVELY CHANGED THE STRATEGIC BALANCE IN SOUTH
VIETNAM.

3. PRESENT INFORMATION DOES NOT ALLOW A FIRM JUDGMENT AS
TO WHETHER HANOI WILL NOW CHANGE FROM ITS MORE DELIBERATE

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"COSVN 1975" STRATEGY AND GO ALL-OUT FOR IMMEDIATE VICTORY.
SINCE WE ARE IN BUSINESS OF MAKING ESTIMATES, HOWEVER, I WOULD
PUSH FOR A COMMUNITY ESTIMATE THAT NORTH VIETNAM WILL SEEK TOTAL
MILITARY VICTORY IN NEXT THREE MONTHS. RECENT MOVEMENTS OF NVA
STRATEGIC RESERVE UNITS POINT IN THIS DIRECTION.

4. THERE IS NO PROPER PLACE FOR IT IN AN INTELLIGENCE
ASSESSMENT, BUT IT SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED THAT MILITARY AID TO
THE GVN AT ANY LEVEL LIKELY TO BE APPROVED BY THE U.S. CONGRESS
WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT CHANGE THE PROGNOSIS.

5. IN SUM, THE ODDS ARE STRONG (A) THAT THE COMMUNISTS WILL
MAKE AN ALL-OUT MILITARY EFFORT IN THE NEXT THREE MONTHS, AND
(B) THAT THEY WILL WIN.

6. REALIZE THAT PARAGRAPHS ABOVE CONTAIN VIEWS FAR MORE
PESSIMISTIC THAN THOSE PREVIOUSLY HELD BY THE AUTHOR. STRONGLY
BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT VIEWS AS BLEAK SHOULD APPEAR IN THE
ASSESSMENT, AND THAT WHAT GOES DOWNTOWN SHOULD CONTAIN ABSOLUTELY
CATEGORICAL JUDGMENTS ON THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SITUATION.
E2 IMPDET.